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SUBJECT: OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL: STATEMENT ON INTIMIDATION  
OF JOURNALISTS IN KYRGYZSTAN

¶1. (U) Post is authorized to present the following statement  
at the November 12, 2009, Permanent Council meeting in Vienna.

Begin text:

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman,

The United States notes with grave concern the news from  
Kyrgyzstan that threats and violence against journalists  
persist.

On November 1st, Kubanychbek Zholdoshev, a reporter for the  
government weekly Osh Shamy, was attacked and beaten by three  
assailants leaving him with a concussion and broken ribs. In  
the days prior to this attack, Zholdoshev reportedly faced  
intimidation as well, and was threatened following  
publication of a story on the quality of education and  
corruption at the university.

The attack on Mr. Zholdoshev represents the seventh assault  
on journalists in Kyrgyzstan this year, one of which resulted  
in death. We call upon the leaders of Kyrgyzstan's government  
to denounce publicly and strongly such attacks upon the  
media.

We are reminded of the statement made in this hall only two  
weeks ago by the Representative on Media Freedom Miklos  
Haraszti, who when speaking about Kyrgyzstan said that a  
"crime as usual-approach" will not suffice to fight violence  
against journalists. We call upon Kyrgyzstan to recognize  
the gravity of the challenge being posed to freedom of the  
media and to restore an intimidation-free atmosphere for  
public discourse by aggressively pursuing those responsible  
for these cowardly acts.

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

END TEXT  
CLINTON